

Municipal Court Clerk

Department Description

The Franklin County Municipal Court Clerk is the legal custodian for the accurate and timely processing and safe keeping of court records and funds. Fundamental to American jurisprudence, the Clerk is the essential impartial entity in the judicial system. Where the fifteen judges dispense justice, the Clerk is required to perform the administrative tasks associated with their legal interpretations and judgments. The Clerk delivers the public services in “the people’s court” by offering information and support regarding all criminal, traffic, environmental, and civil cases filed in the court. Continual services regarding the status of cases, preparing numerous dockets, processing thousands of legal documents, receipting and disbursing funds as well as processing bails are relied upon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Law enforcement agencies, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, attorneys, the City Attorney’s Office, the County Prosecutor and the Public Defender’s Office are just a few of the judicial agencies that rely on the Clerk’s services so that they may continue their services.

Mission

The mission of the Office of the Franklin County Municipal Court Clerk is to professionally, objectively, and enthusiastically serve our fellow citizens and the court, and to tirelessly fulfill all of our statutory mandates so that the court records have absolute integrity and all monies are vigilantly safeguarded.

We shall accomplish our mission by empowering a team of people who consistently demonstrate caring and positive attitudes, which result in a noticeable dedication to help others. Our team is comprised of people who genuinely pursue high character and high competency. We are a group of diverse people who strive to create an environment that prizes individuals, and creates a highly functional office culture powered by a passion for unity, which supports our entire community.

Strategic Priorities for 2006

- Continue the enhancement of service delivery by further developing technological advancements regarding e-clerk practices, including the following:
 - **E-arrest bond** - ability for an individual to post bail on-line, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.
 - **E-attorney** - ability for an attorney to search their case (criminal, traffic, or civil).
 - **E-filing** - ability to file documents via the Municipal Court website.
 - **E-pay** - ability for the public to pay fine and court costs on-line. This is yet another option for the public to pay their financial obligation on the case.
 - **E-search warrant** - ability for law enforcement to submit a search warrant request to a judge for review and approval.

- **E-slating** - ability for law enforcement to submit their criminal complaints electronically through a remote kiosk connected to the Clerk's office.
- **E-subpoena** - ability for police departments to receive subpoena for their agency and direct subpoena via e-mail to the arresting officer(s). This eliminates the paper subpoena and improves efficiency.
- **E-ticket** - ability for law enforcement to generate tickets from the cruiser and transmit data directly to the Municipal Court.
- **Imaging** - ability to electronically view the court docket and associated case paperwork for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Interactive Voice Response (IVR) solution** - ability for the public to call a toll-free number (i.e. 1-800-Ticket) to determine the cost of payable traffic tickets, and provide the option to pay by phone. In addition, this machine will be utilized for basic court and clerk information.
- **Mail - postage solution** - ability to print to a machine that has the capability to print, fold, and insert a document into an envelope, sort for other (same address) documents, group document insertion, sort mail for postal discount, and apply postage. Another option is to e-mail the document as an attachment when pre-approved e-mail delivery has been sanctioned.
- Continue vigilantly to collect all monies owed to the court from fines, court costs and fees which include pursuing the feasibility of establishing new programs like mediation.
- Continue leadership initiatives to further develop deputy clerk team building, effective communications, empowerment and unity by striving to attain our mission.

2006 Budget Issues

- The Municipal Court Clerk's 2006 general fund budget of \$9,415,863 includes funding, with an allowance for vacancies, for 151 full-time employee positions.
- Efforts to collect unpaid fines and costs will continue in 2006. The Clerk estimates the total collections to approach \$1.5 million in 2006.
- The Municipal Court Clerk will continue to explore opportunities to use technology to improve service and communications to the public.
- The Municipal Court Clerk's 2006 computer fund budget of \$2,350,378 includes 12 full-time employee positions.
- The Municipal Court Clerk's 2006 computer fund budget includes funding for supplies, professional services, and equipment related to various technology projects necessary for the continued development of e-clerk practices.

Budget and Program Summary

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUMMARY					
DIVISION SUMMARY	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Original Appropriation	2005 Estimated Expenditures	2006 Proposed
Municipal Court Clerk	\$ 10,445,173	\$ 10,349,341	\$ 12,675,604	\$ 11,505,109	\$ 11,766,241
TOTAL	\$ 10,445,173	\$ 10,349,341	\$ 12,675,604	\$ 11,505,109	\$ 11,766,241

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY CHARACTER					
MUNICIPAL CT CLERK GENERAL FUND	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Original Appropriation	2005 Estimated Expenditures	2006 Proposed
Personnel	\$ 8,532,348	\$ 8,048,551	\$ 8,136,180	\$ 8,044,743	\$ 8,519,959
Materials & Supplies	162,780	150,975	175,500	158,934	169,250
Services	174,102	645,981	713,497	648,977	726,654
TOTAL	\$ 8,869,230	\$ 8,845,507	\$ 9,025,177	\$ 8,852,654	\$ 9,415,863
MUNICIPAL CT CLERK COMPUTER FUND	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Original Appropriation	2005 Estimated Expenditures	2006 Proposed
Personnel	\$ 632,855	\$ 730,669	\$ 940,090	\$ 917,427	\$ 980,831
Materials & Supplies	357,478	105,115	583,200	270,288	176,500
Services	549,880	647,344	1,575,137	1,238,835	801,047
Capital	35,729	20,706	552,000	225,905	344,000
Interest	-	-	-	-	48,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,575,942	\$ 1,503,834	\$ 3,650,427	\$ 2,652,455	\$ 2,350,378

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY FUND					
FUND SUMMARY	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Original Appropriation	2005 Estimated Expenditures	2006 Proposed
General	\$ 8,869,230	\$ 8,845,507	\$ 9,025,177	\$ 8,852,654	\$ 9,415,863
Municipal Court Computer Fund	1,575,943	1,503,834	3,650,427	2,652,455	2,350,378
TOTAL	\$ 10,445,173	\$ 10,349,341	\$ 12,675,604	\$ 11,505,109	\$ 11,766,241

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SUMMARY					
DIVISION	FT/PT	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Authorized	2006 Authorized
Municipal Court Clerk	FT	157	149	172	172
	PT	0	0	0	0
Computer Fund	FT	10	12	12	12
TOTAL		167	161	184	184
*FT=Full-Time PT=Part-Time					

Municipal Court Clerk				
Program:	Administration		2005	2006
			Appropriated	Budget
Program Mission:	To ensure the smooth operation of the Clerk's office by preparing and tracking the annual budget; hiring all deputy clerks; purchasing and maintaining equipment; managing personnel payroll records; overseeing compliance with applicable statutes, rules and case law; preparing statistical reports required by law; reviewing and referring cases to appropriate authorities for collection proceedings; and investigating and responding to inquiries by the public.	Expenditures	\$ 1,007,038	\$ 727,154
		Full-Time	4	4
		Part-Time	0	0
Program:	Accounting/Finance			
Program Mission:	To collect and account for fines, court costs, fees and bail for criminal, environmental and traffic charges filed in the Franklin County Municipal Court, to accept and disburse civil division funds paid to the court for costs and fees, plus judgment and garnishment amounts, to process all mail payments, prepare receipts for monies collected, distribute funds to the proper political subdivisions and make a general accounting of all monies received and disbursed in the Clerk's office.	Expenditures	\$ 1,391,036	\$ 1,759,685
		Full-Time	22	27
		Part-Time	0	0
Program:	Civil			
Program Mission:	To accept dockets and maintain records for all pleadings and motions filed in civil cases over which Franklin County Municipal Court has jurisdiction.	Expenditures	\$ 1,606,567	\$ 1,793,019
		Full-Time	29	30
		Part-Time	0	0

Municipal Court Clerk- continued				
Program:	Criminal/Traffic		2005 Appropriated	2006 Budget
Program Mission:	To accept and process all documents related to criminal and traffic charges in which citations are issued within the jurisdiction of the Franklin County Municipal Court and to process and report all applicable records to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles.	Expenditures	\$ 4,379,142	\$ 4,479,504
		Full-Time	105	100
		Part-Time	0	0
Program:	Office of Information Services			
Program Mission:	To support the Clerk and the Court with data processing needs of all divisions.	Expenditures	\$ 3,650,427	\$ 2,350,378
		Full-Time	12	12
		Part-Time	0	0
Program:	Traffic Violations Bureau			
Program Mission:	To record and process all traffic citations issued by the Columbus Police, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Franklin County Sheriff and other law enforcement agencies throughout Franklin County.	Expenditures	\$ 641,394	\$ 656,501
		Full-Time	12	11
		Part-Time	0	0

